

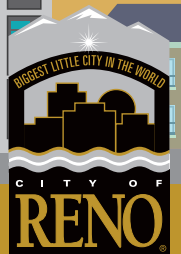
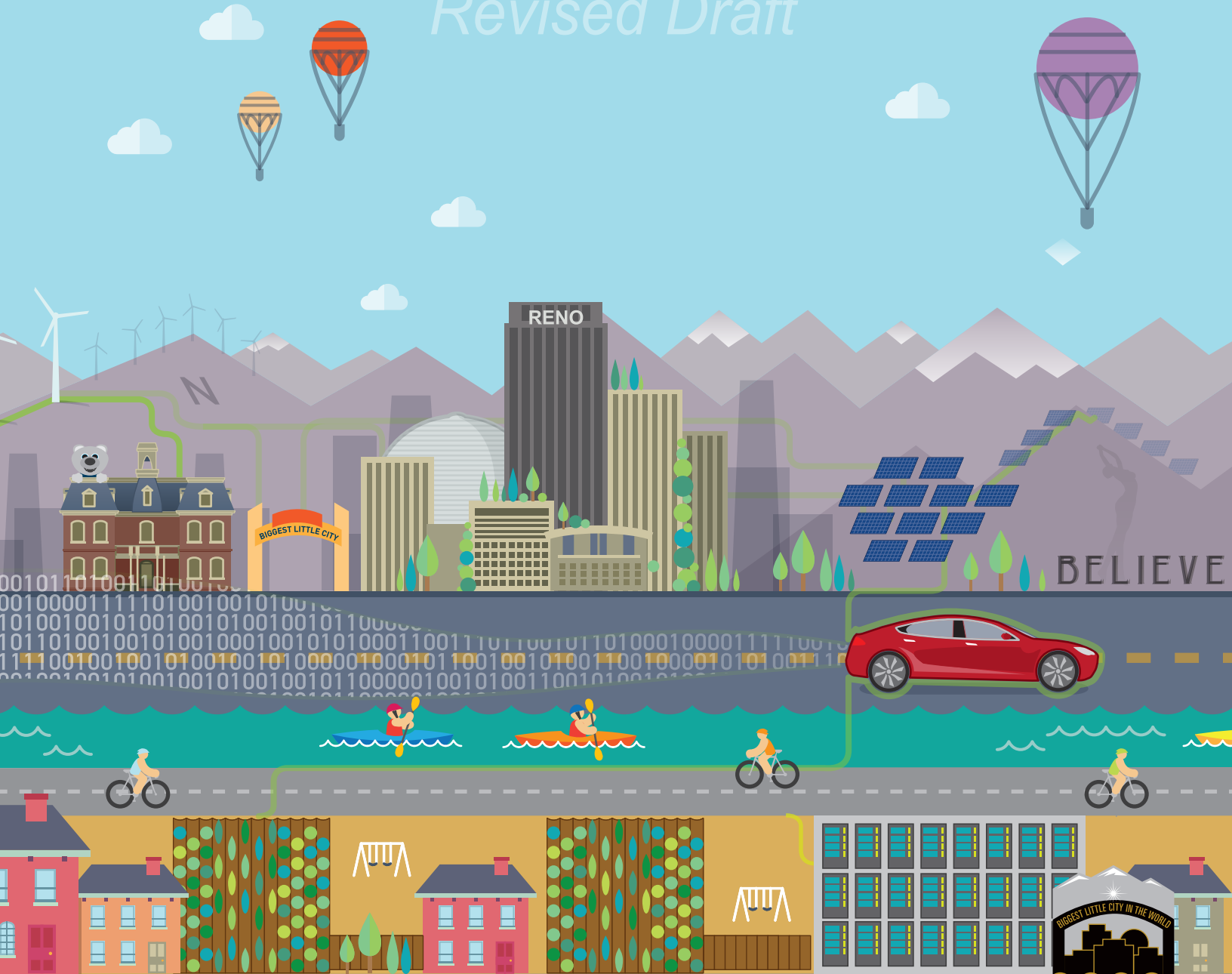


# REIMAGINE RENO

Guiding Principles & Goals

August 2016

*Revised Draft*



## INTRODUCTION

In the spring of 2015, the City of Reno launched a multi-year, community-based effort to prepare a new master plan called ReImagine Reno. In the almost 20 years since the City last undertook a major master plan update effort, the City, community, and region have changed and evolved. The City's current population (236,883) represents an increase of more than 56,000 people since 2000 and is forecast to increase by an additional 72,000 people over the next twenty years—reaching nearly 310,000. During Phase I of the Master Plan update process, the ReImagine Reno team conducted extensive community outreach, an evaluation of current and future trends affecting the City of Reno, and an assessment of the City's existing Master Plan.

This document was developed as a first step in Phase II to establish a foundation for the updated Master Plan—articulating a vision for the future and outlining preliminary goals to help us achieve that vision. Over the coming months, we will continue to work with the community and other stakeholders to further refine this vision, to explore potential trade-offs associated with key policy choices we must make to implement this vision, and to develop an updated Master Plan that will help guide the community toward its desired outcomes.

As we work towards an updated Master Plan, it is important to understand that it must be comprehensive in nature, functioning both as a reflection of the community's vision for the future and as a practical guide for elected and appointed officials as they make decisions that affect the future of the City. As such, this document draws from a broad range of inputs—overarching themes identified as part of the extensive Phase I community outreach, City Council and Planning Commission priorities and direction, current Master Plan goals, the spirit of recommendations from various groups (e.g., Climate Action, Food Policy), the need for alignment with parallel planning efforts and initiatives currently underway (e.g., Compact of Mayors commitment, Sustainability Plan, downtown initiatives, and a forthcoming Regional Plan update), and supplemental community outreach conducted during the spring and summer of 2016.

## PRELIMINARY PLAN FRAMEWORK

The updated Master Plan will ultimately include four levels of policy guidance, each of which is described below. This preliminary Plan Framework establishes the first two levels of policy guidance as a foundation for discussion: guiding principles and goals. As we work toward a draft Master Plan in early 2017, this document will continue to be refined based on input from the community at large, elected and appointed officials, City staff, and a diverse array of stakeholders.



As Phase II progresses, a detailed policy and implementation strategy framework will be developed that draws from both existing Master Plan policies (where aligned with the draft guiding principles and goals) and ongoing discussions with the community and stakeholders.

## ROLE OF THE MASTER PLAN

Once adopted, the updated Master Plan will play a variety of important roles:

1. Provide policy guidance for City Council and Planning Commission in making choices regarding the long-range needs of the community;
2. Articulate the community's vision for citizens, property and business owners, developers, and others invested in—or considering investing in—Reno, and the City's general priorities for implementation;
3. Facilitate continued coordination and collaboration with the City of Sparks and Washoe County, the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC), the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency (TMRPA), as well as the many service providers and public, private, and nonprofit agencies that play a role in the City's future and the quality of life of its residents; and
4. Serve as a foundation for the City's ongoing efforts related to the Compact of Mayors commitment and Sustainability Plan.
5. Fulfill Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) requirements for Master Plan elements.

Consistent application of the Master Plan over time will help maintain momentum generated as part of the community engagement process, demonstrate a strong commitment on the part of the City to move the Plan forward, and promote transparency and accountability as City leadership changes over time.

## A COMMUNITY VISION FOR 2035

The Master Plan aims to define a shared vision for the future of Reno and become the basis for supporting plans and implementation strategies that advance the vision. A successful Master Plan will result in aligning the work products that flow from it, prioritizing initiatives & budgets in concert with updated policies and tools.

## MASTER PLAN INFLUENCES & SUPPORTS

### VISIONING INPUTS

#### COMMUNITY INPUTS

- Food policy initiative
- Climate action initiative
- Healthy communities
- Think Reno idea portal
- Truckee Meadows Tomorrow indicators

#### DATA INPUTS

- Analysis of growth & demographic statistics
- Consensus forecast
- Employment statistics
- TMRPA industrial lands & residential lands analyses

#### ECONOMIC INPUTS

- IBM Smarter Region
- EPIC report
- Governor's Office of Economic Development state plans
- Analysis of trends, market conditions and fiscal impacts

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ReImagine  
Reno  
(6,500  
participants  
and counting)

UNR 2014 Master  
Plan

Downtown  
Action Plan

Master Plan

Business  
Districts

Urban Land  
Institute  
recommendations

### TOOLS & IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Neighborhood  
Plans

Strategic  
Plan

Sustainability  
Plan

Title 18  
Update

Capital  
Improvement  
Plan

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Reno's vision for the future is embodied in the eight guiding principles below. They reflect the vision and values of the community and seek to answer the following questions: What do we value about our community today that we want to ensure we protect? What would we like to see change or improve in the future? What do we want to be recognized for? How can we ensure the quality of life we enjoy today is maintained for our children and grandchildren? Together, these guiding principles reflect the components of what makes the Reno of today, highlight areas for focus as we look to the future, and promote a more sustainable and resilient community:

- GP 1: Resilient local and regional economy
- GP 2: Responsible and well-managed growth
- GP 3: Thriving downtown and university district
- GP 4: Vibrant neighborhoods and centers
- GP 5: Well-connected city and region
- GP 6: Safe, healthy, and inclusive community
- GP 7: Quality places and outdoor recreation opportunities
- GP 8: Effective government

Because the guiding principles are closely interrelated, they are intended to be viewed as being equal in weight and are not listed in any particular order of importance. This foundation encourages systems thinking to recognize and emphasize the interrelationships among all aspects of the community's vision. A systems thinking perspective recognizes the interdependent economic, social, and environmental implications of policies, decisions, and outcomes, and recognizes the benefits and trade-offs across these topic areas.

On the pages that follow, a discussion is provided to support each of the guiding principles: 1) Where we are today—which highlights major trends and key issues that emerged from Phase I; 2) Looking to the future—which describes a preliminary direction for Reno in response to the trends and key issues and input received to date; 3) A series of goals that begin to articulate specific targets or objectives we need to work toward to achieve the guiding principles; and 4) What we've heard—which highlights relevant input received as part of Phase I public engagement activities.

This document will continue to be refined and expanded as more detailed policies and recommended actions are developed as part of the updated Master Plan.

# REIMAGINE RENO

## GUIDING PRINCIPLE



GP 1: Resilient local and regional economy



GP 2: Responsible and well-managed growth



GP 3: Thriving downtown and university district



GP 4: Vibrant neighborhoods and centers



GP 5: Well-connected city and region



GP 6: Safe, healthy, and inclusive community



GP 7: Quality places and outdoor recreation opportunities



GP 8: Effective government

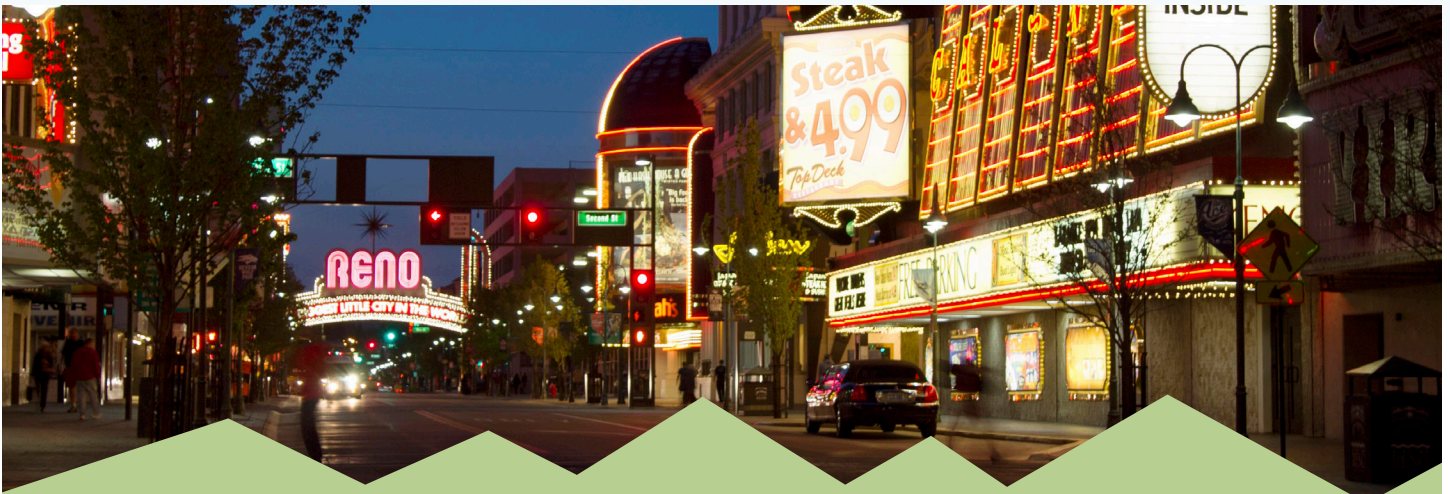
## TOPICS ADDRESSED

- Economic diversity
- Regional collaboration and partnerships
- Business-friendly environment
- Workforce development
- Business development and retention
- Growth management
- Pattern of growth
- Annexation policy
- Regional collaboration
- Infrastructure and services
- Resource efficient development practices
- Mix of uses
- Public safety
- Public and community spaces
- Revitalization and adaptive reuse
- Mix of housing types
- Mixed use development
- Neighborhood Amenities
- Infill and redevelopment
- Pedestrian & cycling orientation
- Multimodal transportation (transit, bikes, pedestrian ways, roadways, etc.)
- Affordable housing
- Public safety
- Hazard mitigation/emergency preparedness
- Inclusivity
- Local food access/food security
- Health and wellness
- Lifelong learning
- Historic preservation
- Conservation of natural resources
- Greenway connections
- Access to the outdoors
- Arts and culture
- Parks & recreation
- Civic engagement
- Commitment
- Collaboration





# GP 1: RESILIENT LOCAL & REGIONAL ECONOMY



## WHERE ARE WE TODAY?

Following job losses over the past ten years and a high unemployment rate, Reno is now experiencing a period of sustained job growth. Unemployment is down, although not quite to levels seen prior to the Great Recession. Within the City of Reno, many jobs today remain in the service sector industries—especially those related to tourism, gaming and casinos. Other major employers include the Washoe County School District, University of Nevada-Reno (UNR), and Renown Regional Medical Center. At the regional level, large firms, such as Tesla, Switch, Apple, and Amazon have announced investments in the Reno area, with more expected. Many of the new jobs offered by these firms will require skills and experience in specialized fields, attributes not all Reno workers currently have. While educational institutions such as UNR and Truckee Meadows Community College have started programs to train students in technology, advanced manufacturing, and other pertinent fields, there is still expected to be a shortage of qualified workers in Reno in the near-term.

The City of Reno works closely with the Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada (EDAWN) and the Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED) on economic development activities, but currently lacks a strategy to define how regional economic development policies and strategies should be applied at the local level. Key considerations include the potential for an influx of skilled workers from outside the region to fill new jobs, the impacts of the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center (TRI-Center) in neighboring Storey County and whether the City has or will have sufficient housing to meet the needs of new residents, as well as the potential impacts of a constrained housing market on the affordability of housing for existing and future residents. Another consideration is whether Reno has a sufficient supply of industrial sites available that are aligned with the types of employers the City seeks to attract in terms of their size, access, service levels, and other considerations. Lastly, while UNR and the City's outdoor lifestyle are a natural draw for millennials (those between the ages of 19 and 35 in 2016), it is not clear how many remain in Reno following graduation.

Photo Credit:  
RenoTahoe, Creative Commons







## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The City will work with partners at all levels to diversify the local and regional economy—continuing to foster growth in high-tech and knowledge-based industries, while also recognizing the important role small and local businesses, tourism, arts and culture, and outdoor recreation play in the City’s economy and sense of place. Also in collaboration with regional partners, the City will work to ensure that Reno is an attractive place for existing and future employers and residents. Investments in infrastructure, public safety, and quality of life amenities will be a key focus, as will efforts to leverage the presence and continued growth of UNR, revitalize downtown, define local priorities in terms of serviceable employment land, provide workforce training and adult education programs for workers in Reno, and continue to attract residents from outside the region—especially for those with jobs skills that can support existing and new businesses. Both tourism and gaming will continue to play a role in the City’s economy moving forward, but current trends suggest a shift toward outdoor/life-style and related industries.

## GOALS

- **1.1: Promote a diverse and stable economic base.**
- **1.2: Support continued growth of Reno’s technology and knowledge-based sectors.**
- **1.3: Support the growth, creation, and retention of local businesses and start-ups.**
- **1.4: Build strong partnerships and encourage local and regional collaboration on economic development initiatives.**
- **1.5: Foster a business- and employee-friendly environment.**
- **1.6: Support the development of a diverse, educated, and adaptable workforce.**

## WHAT WE’VE HEARD: ECONOMY

“In 20 years Reno is a base for outdoor activities, a technology center, and a university town.”

“Don’t “get rid of the gambling completely—as it is a fun stop every now and then—but it should not be the lifeline of our focus.”

“Imagine Reno as a nexus for all things energy: lithium batteries, smart grid research, even forward thinking next generation nuclear plant design employing strategies that use thorium.”

“Make Reno a place where talented educated people would want to live raise families and build business.”

“To be a high tech mecca, bring in Google fiber and other services that will assist our region in becoming a competitive space. Don’t just settle for any type of manufacturing, bring in high tech manufacturing.”

“Keep personal and business taxes low, and businesses will come.”

“Make Reno a more hip and urban environment that is eco-friendly and family friendly too. Reno has potential to be a great city with lots of culture, dining opportunities, and events.”

“I don’t think gaming can be our entirely dominant industry. It’s not sustainable, and it’s not conducive to maintaining a strong local culture and population.”



# GP 2: RESPONSIBLE & WELL-MANAGED GROWTH



## WHERE ARE WE TODAY?

Reno's population is growing and is expected to continue to grow in the future. After being particularly hard hit during the Great Recession, Reno has seen an increase in building permits in recent years, home values appear to be stabilizing, and employment in construction has increased faster than any other industry. However, we desire stability for the future and seek to minimize speculative markets like the one that made us particularly vulnerable to the Great Recession. The impacts of employment growth forecast in neighboring Storey County—both real and speculative, such as increased demands for housing, services, and transportation without any of the direct economic benefits or tax revenues generated by these businesses—are a concern for Reno and its partners in the region.

The timing and location of residential and non-residential development in Reno today is influenced by several interconnected factors—available land, the availability of infrastructure and services (water, sewer and wastewater, transportation, police and fire), and market demand. While there is no lack of vacant land within the City of Reno and its sphere of influence today, there is a lack of land that is “shovel ready” in terms of infrastructure and services. Wastewater facilities in the region all have spare operating capacity and the main water utility in the region has enough water in its system to meet the current and future needs of residents and businesses in the Truckee Meadows, but constraints such as water quality regulations governing discharges into the Truckee River, the reuse or disposal of reclaimed water, and a lack of available water services in some places within the Truckee Meadows Service Area (particularly in the North Valleys) could create barriers to future development. Balancing the need for investments in new infrastructure with the need for improvements to existing infrastructure in established areas of the City is an ongoing challenge.

Market demand has been a strong driver of Reno's growth pattern over the past 15 years. Reno residents have historically preferred to drive and live in single-family, detached homes—a sentiment that played out in the approval of numerous, large, planned unit developments on the outskirts of the City prior to the Great Recession. Although a recent survey revealed that many residents still have a preference for single-family homes, they also expressed a preference for homes in pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods that are located close to local shopping and dining options and other amenities. Some survey respondents suggested a stronger focus on infill development was needed. In fact, the City has had policies, regulations, and incentives in place for nearly 15 years that seek to direct higher density infill and redevelopment within designated Centers and transit-oriented development (TOD) Corridors where it can be served by transit. However, limited development meeting these criteria has occurred in these locations to date, and targets set by the Truckee Meadows Regional Plan for the overall percentage of growth occurring in these locations have not been met.

In the past, trade-offs in fiscal costs and benefits to the City for greenfield vs. infill development have not been used as a decision-making tool in major development approvals; however, the City recently invested in the preparation of a fiscal impact model to help inform future discussions and decisions about growth.

Photo Credit:  
David Homen, #renolens





## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Future growth in Reno will occur through a combination of greenfield development and infill/redevelopment—a balance that will ensure existing and future residents have access to a variety of lifestyle and housing options based on preference, financial means, and physical needs. The City will encourage growth that supports the quality of life that residents desire, but that is also fiscally and environmentally responsible. In doing so, the City will take a more proactive approach to infrastructure and services currently not in their purview, working closely with regional partners and service providers to prioritize limited resources and to balance the need to improve existing services and infrastructure with the need for new ones. The use of sustainable development practices—water conservation, renewable energy, energy efficiency, and others—will be encouraged to reduce the impacts of future growth on the environment.

## GOALS

- **2.1: Support a fiscally-responsible growth pattern and annexation policy to maintain and improve existing levels of service for current residents and future generations.**
- **2.2: Encourage infill and redevelopment.**
- **2.3: Ensure effective, efficient, and equitable delivery of City services and infrastructure.**
- **2.4: Collaborate with regional entities and service providers on growth and infrastructure issues.**
- **2.5: Promote the use of sustainable development practices.**

## WHAT WE'VE HEARD: GROWTH

“Prefer to see more infill rather than sprawl, but still allowing for some development of new houses.”

“Encourage sustainability. Limited water resources and projected growth create a conundrum that needs to be solved now. Not once it's too late.”

“I would like to see the city become environmentally sustainable. We must do something about conserving water; we have a lot of sunshine -why we don't have solar panels everywhere is crazy to me.”

“I'm very concerned about urban sprawl and that Reno is subject to a boom and bust community. We've seen it before.”

“Single family home neighborhoods are lovely and I feel lucky to live in one, however I think nice apartment buildings that have easy access to grocery stores, shopping, etc are the most efficient way to house Reno's growing population.”

“Invest in infrastructure.”

“I do not want it to be like California with houses all stacked on each other with no yards - we need space for our kids to stretch.”

“Maintenance and condition of infrastructure.”





# GP 3: THRIVING DOWNTOWN & UNIVERSITY DISTRICT



## WHERE ARE WE TODAY?

Reno's downtown is an area of great importance to the community and many consider it the "heart of the City." Downtown Reno has many great assets and amenities that draw residents and visitors throughout the year. The most prominent of these assets is the Truckee River, which flows through the center of downtown and features an urban river walk, kayak course, and multiple pedestrian plazas and parks. Downtown is also home to many major community events, a significant collection of public art, and a number of major arts and cultural facilities—including a performing arts center, the National Automobile Museum, Nevada Museum of Art, a AAA baseball stadium, and many others. Downtown is also well-served by public transportation and features a new transit center that provides direct connections to Sparks, South Virginia Street and other destinations within the City and region. Despite significant public and private investment in these and other assets, the conversion of two former casino towers to residential condominiums and a third to a new boutique hotel, a movie theatre and numerous restaurants over the past 15 years, many parts of downtown are in need of attention. Vacant and blighted buildings—including many former hotels or casinos with blank walls and "dead" storefronts—the conversion of former motels and casinos to short-term rentals, and the perception of high drug use and mental health issues in the homeless population have resulted in general dissatisfaction among residents about the current state of downtown and concerns about public safety, cleanliness, and visitor perceptions.

In spite of its many challenges, there is strong support in the community to leverage the investments that have been made and to "reinvent" downtown as a place that both residents and visitors enjoy. One of the key opportunities associated with downtown is its proximity to the UNR campus. This opportunity was explored through a recent Campus Master Plan effort conducted by the University in partnership with the City, which recommended creating a new mixed-use University District on the north side of downtown to activate the area and create a safe and inviting linkage between the core of downtown and the campus. Other opportunities include diversifying the mix of uses in downtown to include additional residential, retail, and other uses as the role of the gaming industry in Reno continues to evolve. The Downtown Reno Regional Center Plan identifies five distinct character districts within downtown and provides a framework for these discussions, in conjunction with the University of Nevada Regional Center Plan.

Photo Credit:  
RenoTahoe,  
Creative Commons





## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Reno will work with the private sector, UNR, and other partners to leverage the significant public/private investments that have already been made in downtown and to actively promote its revitalization. Central to this effort will be a focus on developing a collaborative strategy for creating an active University District that links the core campus with downtown, establishing tools and incentives to help promote the adaptive reuse of downtown buildings, defining a sustainable mix of uses, enhancing multimodal connections between downtown and other destinations within the region, and working with the gaming and casino industry to define a new role for the future. As a result of these efforts, public spaces and streets in downtown will be clean and well-maintained, creating an environment that is safe and inviting for residents and visitors.

## GOALS

- **Goal 3.1: Encourage uses and activities in downtown that balance the needs of residents and visitors.**
- **Goal 3.2: Enhance public safety and create inviting streets and public spaces for people.**
- **Goal 3.3: Promote the adaptive reuse of buildings and infill/redevelopment of underutilized sites to support revitalization.**
- **Goal 3.4: Strengthen connections between UNR and downtown Reno through the creation of an active, mixed-use University District.**
- **Goal 3.5: Continue to support downtown as a destination for community-oriented events and activities.**

## WHAT WE'VE HEARD: DOWNTOWN

“It would be really nice to clean up downtown. It is such an eyesore for anyone looking to move to Reno. People that live here know better but visitors don't.”

“Better low cost housing downtown, get families out of weeklies.”

“I'd like to feel like downtown is cleaner: the run down businesses give downtown an “unsafe” feeling although it is pretty safe.”

“Please do something awesome to connect UNR to downtown.”

“I love where our university is going, I love the intention behind our startups and local businesses, I love the kinds of local businesses we're attracting, and I still believe there is no more authentic and pleasant of a city than Reno.”

“Strong dislike for the downtown area. Find it very embarrassing to take out-of-town guest down there. We need to get it cleaned-up and make it more usable for guests and locals.”

“More street lights and police to keep the streets safe when walking downtown and on campus.”



# GP 4: VIBRANT NEIGHBORHOODS & CENTERS



## WHERE ARE WE TODAY?

Much of the vacant residential land that is available in Reno is designated for single-family housing development. While this housing type has long been the predominant option available in Reno—and residents have continued to express a preference for single-family homes—other options should be explored to meet the changing needs of the community and to diversify the housing portfolio. For example, an increasing senior population generally correlates with an increased demand for low-maintenance, single-level-living residential units with internal community space, typically found in condominiums, apartments, and senior living communities. Alternative housing types may also be desirable from a services perspective, as attached housing types tend to be more efficient to serve than low-density single-family developments. Sustainability is also a consideration, as dense housing options generally use less water and energy than single-family homes and tend to be more cost effective to service with public transit.

Regardless of whether they favored infill or greenfield development, residents expressed a preference for homes in neighborhoods that are located close to local shopping and dining options, with access to outdoor activities and other amenities, and that have a variety of housing types to break-up the visual feel and experience of a neighborhood.

Many residents have suggested a stronger focus on infill development is needed. In fact, the City has had policies, regulations, and incentives in place for nearly 15 years that seek to direct higher density infill and redevelopment within designated centers and TOD corridors where it can be served by transit. While many residents expressed support for infill and redevelopment and the centers and corridors concept, most also indicated it needed to be applied in a more focused way.

Photo Credit:  
Mark Vollmer, #renolens





## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

In both infill and greenfield locations, the City will actively encourage the development of more diverse neighborhoods that are served by vibrant mixed-use centers, access to recreational opportunities, essential services (i.e., schools), and amenities. Neighborhoods will be encouraged to incorporate distinguishing features and pedestrian-oriented characteristics that create a sense of place and community for residents. Opportunities to increase average densities and accommodate a broader mix of uses will be supported as a means to expand housing options near existing and future transit, increase the diversity of lifestyle options that are available to residents, and reduce the fiscal

## GOALS

- **Goal 4.1: Encourage a diverse mix of housing types to meet the needs of existing and future residents of all ages, abilities, and income levels.**
- **Goal 4.2: Promote the development of new neighborhoods and reinvest in existing neighborhoods to offer a range of lifestyle options and amenities that meet the short- and long-term needs of the community.**
- **Goal 4.3: Support continued investment in and ongoing maintenance of infrastructure and amenities in established neighborhoods.**
- **Goal 4.4: Encourage the creation of walkable mixed-use centers that provide a variety of services and amenities to meet the needs of adjacent neighborhoods.**
- **Goal 4.5: Encourage pedestrian and bicycle connections as part of new development and integrate into established neighborhoods.**

## WHAT WE'VE HEARD: NEIGHBORHOODS & CENTERS

“Less strip malls with the same old franchises, more locally owned shops, restaurants, and bars.”

“I like the river walk area and the other areas where local restaurants and shops are opening. I like the big box stores, etc. outside of downtown.”

“Would like to see a multiple blocks of continuous dining and boutique shopping in downtown Reno and Riverside Drive. Currently, it's a checkerboard of a few cool places, flanked by blighted areas. It's not cohesive.”

“Less strip malls, more walkable neighborhood businesses (think former Lander St. Market & Wild Garlic/Coffee Bar).”

“Reno can use a row of boutique stores, bars and restaurants in a respective clean neighborhood, similar to San Diego's Gas Lamp District, that again we can be proud of when suggesting to visitors a fun, safe place to go in Reno.”

“Less chains and strip malls—more local places and more local businesses.”

“I would love to see Reno be more of a “walking city.” I have noticed more walkers in downtown and Midtown lately, and the community vibe that engenders is electric.”





# GP 5: WELL-CONNECTED CITY & REGION



## WHERE ARE WE TODAY?

Reno's residents value the ease with which they can travel around the City and the fact that most destinations in the City and region can be reached in 20 minutes or less. However, as the region's roadways reach and exceed their designed-for capacities, traffic and congestion are becoming larger issues. In addition, population growth and changing commuting patterns could exacerbate these trends—already workers in the City have seen their average commute times increase over the past 15 years. In response, the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) has shifted its focus to providing more public transit service in the region, and both RTC and the City of Reno have invested in new bike lanes and sidewalks in order to increase connectivity between destinations within the City and promote greater use of alternative modes of transportation. While most residents still choose to drive for most daily trips, demand for infrastructure that supports alternative modes of travel—such as walking, bicycling, and taking transit—is growing. Mobility is also an issue for older residents—a growing percentage of the population—who are no longer able to drive cars, but still need to access services and move around the City.

Balancing the need to maintain existing transportation facilities with the need to invest in new facilities is an ongoing challenge at the local, state, and federal level due to limited funding for transportation projects. Available funding will not be enough to address all of the region's needs and will require careful consideration of priorities and potential trade-offs associated with future investment in transportation facilities.

Recent innovations in technology have made the prospect of driverless cars and other autonomous vehicles a possibility within the 20-year planning horizon of the Master Plan, and the Reno region is home to a number of companies focused on technological innovations in transportation. The timing and magnitude of the impacts of such technological advancements on transportation systems remain uncertain, but present a tremendous opportunity for Reno to be a leader and innovator in this area.

Photo Credit:  
RenoTahoe,  
Creative Commons





## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Reno will continue to collaborate with RTC, the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT), and other regional partners on targeted investments in new and existing infrastructure to address priorities for transportation and help the City maintain its status as a “20-minute town.” This will require an emphasis on the efficient use of existing transportation facilities, improved access for all modes of travel (auto, bike, pedestrians, and transit), and an integrated approach to land use and transportation. Improving pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and filling “gaps” in the system will be a key consideration in the design of new neighborhoods and the retrofitting of established neighborhoods and commercial areas. Higher intensity, walkable development will continue to be encouraged in areas where it can be readily served by existing or future transit. The City will also seek to leverage Reno’s rail and airport access, and become a leader in preparing for—or even supporting—emerging technologies from both a transportation and economic development perspective.

## GOALS

- **Goal 5.1: Provide a balanced transportation system that offers safe, efficient, and reliable travel options for all modes (driving, bicycling, walking, and taking transit).**
- **Goal 5.2: Continue to develop a well-connected bicycle and pedestrian network that provides recreation and commute options throughout the City.**
- **Goal 5.3: Actively manage transportation systems and infrastructure to improve efficiency and safety.**
- **Goal 5.4: Facilitate the movement of goods and services throughout the region via truck, air, and rail.**
- **Goal 5.5: Encourage the use of transit, car or van pools, bicycling, walking, and other forms of alternative transportation.**
- **Goal 5.6: Anticipate and plan for the implications and opportunities associated with connected vehicles, autonomous vehicles, and the expected transition from personal car ownership to mobility-as-a-service.**

## WHAT WE’VE HEARD: TRANSPORTATION

“One of the best things about Reno is that drive times are relatively low and it’s easy to get from place to place.”

“Please stop reducing the traffic capacity of existing streets by adding bike lanes and please spend some money on fixing traffic signal coordination.”

“We need real public transit and a carbon tax that makes driving and sprawl not economically viable.”

“Traffic is getting busier and street capacity is becoming less.”

“The problem with our bicycling/walking trails is connectivity. Many new developments have them but they often end in a dead end!”

“I have less than zero interest in public transportation, and neither does the majority of the population.”

“I would love to see Reno be more of a “walking city.” I have noticed more walkers in downtown and Midtown lately, and the community vibe that engenders is electric.”

“Hate the traffic coming into the city from North Valley.”

“Mass transit-like light rail and streetcars- are significantly better for attracting and keeping younger professionals.”

“Nobody rides a bike in Reno. Stop narrowing the streets to inconvenience thousands of people a day for one bicyclist, who doesn’t pay any road tax. Focus on the 99%, the drivers.”

“We would all take public transit if it was faster and close-cost is not the issue.”





# GP 6: SAFE, HEALTHY, & INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY



## WHERE ARE WE TODAY?

In recent years, the City of Reno has seen a decrease in crimes and an increase in public perceptions of safety. However, concerns remain about drugs, gangs, and theft, as well as panhandling and graffiti in certain areas of the City. Public safety considerations also include emergency preparedness—the ability of the City to mitigate risks associated with natural and man-made hazards such as flooding, wildfire, and earthquakes, and recover quickly from unexpected events. The City, in collaboration with partners in the region, recently updated its hazard mitigation plan and is involved in a number of mitigation projects such as the recent Virginia Street Bridge flood control project.

While the population of Washoe County is generally in good health, over half the region is considered overweight or obese and the majority of residents do not engage in the recommended amount of physical activity. Access to health providers and services is also a growing concern. In addition, Reno suffers periods of impaired air quality, and is considered to be a non-attainment area for air quality standards set for coarse particulate matter (PM10), creating health risks for residents. Other health considerations include chronic disease, hunger, and community food security, issues for which the Washoe County Health District has been working with the community to promote awareness and to address. Increasing access to local and healthy foods in general is of interest to some residents.

The population of the City is changing. While Reno's median age is becoming younger, the percentage of Reno residents over the age of 65 is expected to grow at more than twice the rate of the population as a whole, and the City is also becoming more ethnically diverse. Many residents noted they appreciated Reno's diversity in terms of age, ethnicity, income, outlook, and sexual orientation, but expressed a desire for more inclusivity, cultural awareness, and appreciation of different backgrounds.

While housing remains relatively affordable in Reno today, it is a growing concern for many residents who are dedicating increasingly unsustainable portions of their income towards housing. Many residents have also expressed concern that the City's current period of economic growth will have a negative impact on the economic diversity of households in the City, becoming unaffordable for current residents who wish to stay in the community, as well as for new residents wishing to relocate to Reno.

Photo Credit:  
RenoTahoe,  
Creative Commons





## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Reno will continue to place a high priority on ensuring the safety of residents and work with regional partners to ensure residents are well-informed about potential risks the community faces and are prepared to withstand future emergencies. The City will collaborate with local and regional partners to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse population—holding more cultural events, supporting community health initiatives, promoting affordable and accessible housing options, increasing youth engagement, providing more targeted services for marginalized populations, and ensuring all residents have access to quality schools and lifelong learning opportunities.

## GOALS

- **Goal 6.1: Provide high-quality community safety services.**
- **Goal 6.2: Minimize risks to property, infrastructure, and lives due to natural disasters and other natural or man-made hazards.**
- **Goal 6.3: Support active lifestyles among residents of all ages.**
- **Goal 6.4: Encourage health and wellness through education and prevention.**
- **Goal 6.5: Increase the availability of and access to fresh, healthy, and local food.**
- **Goal 6.6: Foster a culture of inclusivity—embracing and respecting the diversity of Reno’s residents.**
- **Goal 6.7: Advocate for a strong and successful education system, workforce training, and lifelong learning opportunities.**

## WHAT WE’VE HEARD: SAFETY, COMMUNITY, LOCAL FOOD, & AFFORDABILITY

“If there were more street lights along darker areas of the freeway and along some back streets that would increase my satisfaction.”

“We need more enforcement of speed limits in neighborhoods and school zones.”

“If we want anything to get better, we have to focus on reducing crime in Reno. It detracts visitors, and it’s almost impossible to enjoy what Reno has to offer when we’re constantly worried about our safety, especially at night.”

“We need dignified high quality affordable housing so we continue to be a place of economic mobility.”

“Friendliness of community is a major attraction of Reno.”

“More housing for the middle class.”

“Seeing Reno take shape in a comparable way to Portland and San Francisco is great, culturally-until I can’t find a decent breakfast for under \$15 and I’m having to wait 90 minutes to be seated.”

“More solutions for the homeless or transient, especially struggling families. Not gentrification but real sustainable solutions as our economy grows.”

“I would personally like to see more local, organic food available in ALL stores at affordable prices.”

“I love the direction Reno has been headed in the last 5 years—with more local, conscious businesses and restaurants, sense of community, urban farms.”

“It’s becoming nearly impossible to rent in the city now, without minimum wage being raised to support the raising in rent prices.”





# GP 7: QUALITY PLACES & OUTDOOR RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES



## WHERE ARE WE TODAY?

Reno's residents value the city's sense of community. While the concept of community can mean different things to different people, Reno's sense of community is often described as "a small town feeling in a large town place" or a "right-sized" community that is big enough to accommodate diversity and choices, yet small enough to feel comfortable. "Warm," "welcoming," "friendly," and "open" are all words used by residents to describe what they love about Reno.

Reno's residents also value the city's unique location and assets—particularly its proximity to the natural amenities of the Sierras, Lake Tahoe, the Truckee River, Pyramid Lake, and vast open spaces in every direction. The city's sense of place is influenced by views of, and access to, these many assets and the city serves as a base for countless outdoor activities that suite a variety of interests, such as winter snow sports, summer water sports, fishing, hiking, cycling, hunting, horseback riding, outdoor motor sports, bird watching, kayaking, ballooning. Efforts to enhance pedestrian and bicycle access to public lands and other amenities that abut the city limits have been underway for nearly ten years as part of the City's Open Space and Greenways Plan.

Residents also cite the role of arts and culture in defining the city's sense of place. For years, Reno has been committed to public art and has recognized the important role of performing and visual arts in City life. In recent years, the visibility of the city's arts and culture scene has been elevated by the growing popularity of Burning Man, Artown, and other local events, as well as by the efforts of artists and art organizations in rejuvenating the city's established neighborhoods and downtown. These efforts have been to the delight of locals and visitors alike.

Lastly, Reno's residents value the city's heritage. With roots in the railroad, mining, agriculture, and other industries, the city has a strong western ethos that is clearly visible in older parts of the city. Reno is home to numerous historic buildings, monuments, and cultural artifacts and many have worked to promote historic preservation efforts. In recent years, historic structures have been adapted for new uses that meet today's needs while preserving their distinct character, such as the former downtown post office, the McKinley school, and the former train depot turned distillery building on East 4th Street. A continued, thoughtful, and balanced approach to Reno's historic resources will be needed as the City seeks to increase infill and redevelopment.

Photo Credit:  
Janis Knight, #renolens





## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

In the face of forecast growth, it will be crucial that Reno sustain the high quality of life that residents currently enjoy. Indeed, this is one of the main reasons people are attracted to Reno and why they choose to call it home. The City will actively pursue opportunities to expand the existing parks and open space network and enhance pedestrian and bicycle connectivity within the city and to open spaces and public lands outside it. The City will continue to support arts and cultural activities, working in partnership with artists and art organizations to elevate the visibility and viability of ongoing efforts and to retain the presence of these individuals and groups as the community grows. Likewise, the City will continue to support historic preservation efforts throughout the community and to work with neighborhoods, property owners, and others to add more structures to the historic register and to develop the tools and incentives needed to protect these important assets.

## GOALS

- **Goal 7.1: Conserve and protect Reno’s natural resources and environment.**
- **Goal 7.2: Maintain access to public lands at the urban/rural interface.**
- **Goal 7.3: Maximize connections between the City’s pedestrian and bicycle network and trails, parks, and open space.**
- **Goal 7.4: Increase Reno’s profile as a center of arts and culture.**
- **Goal 7.5: Protect and preserve Reno’s heritage and historic assets.**
- **Goal 7.6: Improve the quality of the public realm--parks, public spaces, streets--through better design, investment, and regular maintenance.**
- **Goal 7.7: Increase tree canopy and drought-tolerant landscaping/plantings within the City.**

## WHAT WE’VE HEARD: SENSE OF COMMUNITY/PLACE

“In 20 years Reno is a base for outdoor activities and an arts and culture center.”

“Reno is poised as a gateway to such splendid outdoor space with Tahoe and the Sierra at its doorstep—Reno can capitalize on it.”

“Please continue your efforts to support and advance the arts in Reno. Art is a driving regenerative force in cities and neighborhoods, big and small.”

“Maintain the sense of place—we are a high desert community surrounded by beautiful mountains and open space that provide scenery, recreation and pride.”

“Love the small town feeling, in a large town place.”

“I would love to see more effort and funding spent towards making Reno a world class adventure destination. This would take advantage of the natural geography here, while also offering an alternate revenue stream that is not dependent on gaming at all.”

“Love that Reno is affordable and has a sense of community.”

“I would love for Reno to be known nationally and internationally as an arts destination, with lots and lots of public art, including Burning Man sculptures.”

“The outdoor opportunities (hiking, camping, backpacking, etc.) are what keeps me here.”

“Tourism should move in the direction of being seen as an outdoor activity town, showcasing local beauty.”





# GP 8: EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT



## WHERE ARE WE TODAY?

Historically, Reno’s Master Plan has primarily been used in the review of individual development proposals. While ensuring future development is consistent with the City’s goals and policies is an essential role that the Master Plan should continue to play, the updated Master Plan has the potential to be used much more strategically by Reno’s elected and appointed officials and City staff in day-to-day decision-making. The City has made a concerted effort in recent years to more broadly engage all segments of Reno’s community in discussions about Reno’s future. As a result, community engagement numbers have been unprecedented and residents have expressed a clear desire to translate the momentum that’s been established into an actionable plan for the future.

Photo Credit:  
Ed Stillwell, #renolens







## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

As an organization, Reno will strive to be fiscally responsible, accessible, and responsive to residents and the business community. City leaders will foster a culture of collaboration, transparency, and accountability, using the community-based Master Plan as a tool for guiding budget priorities and capital improvements, as well as for day-to-day policy guidance. Annual reporting on the Master Plan will be conducted to support the Plan's implementation and to ensure it continues to reflect the values of the community. A variety of opportunities for all residents to be engaged in the civic process will be provided through formal City boards and commissions and a variety of other forums. The City will be a leader in regional discussions.

## GOALS

- **Goal 8.1: Align day-to-day decision-making and budgeting with the implementation of the Master Plan.**
- **Goal 8.2: Enhance teamwork, cooperation, and problem-solving within the City organization.**
- **Goal 8.3: Develop and support leadership that reflects the diversity of the community.**
- **Goal 8.4: Encourage citizen engagement.**
- **Goal 8.5: Continually seek opportunities to increase the efficiency of City facilities and the effectiveness of government programs and City Services.**
- **Goal 8.6: Collaborate with local and regional partners on issues of mutual significance.**

## WHAT WE'VE HEARD: MUNICIPAL PERFORMANCE

“Increased emphasis on interacting with the community appreciated.”

“Return of the Neighborhood Advisory Boards (NABs) has been a positive development.”

“Need for better communication with city leadership.”

“Improved communication and coordination between regional jurisdictions.”

“Need a stronger vision and shared plan of action by the Mayor and Council that is delivered upon.”

“Establish a clear linkage between the Master Plan, Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and/or Budget Priorities.”

“Leadership needs to stay focused and not get distracted by small and short-term issues.”

“More diversity needed in the police force and city government more broadly.”

“Need to reinforce the importance of “sticking with” the vision and updated Master Plan over time.”

“Foster an environment (through the updated Master Plan) that is more predictable for neighborhoods, the development community, City staff, and elected and appointed officials.”

